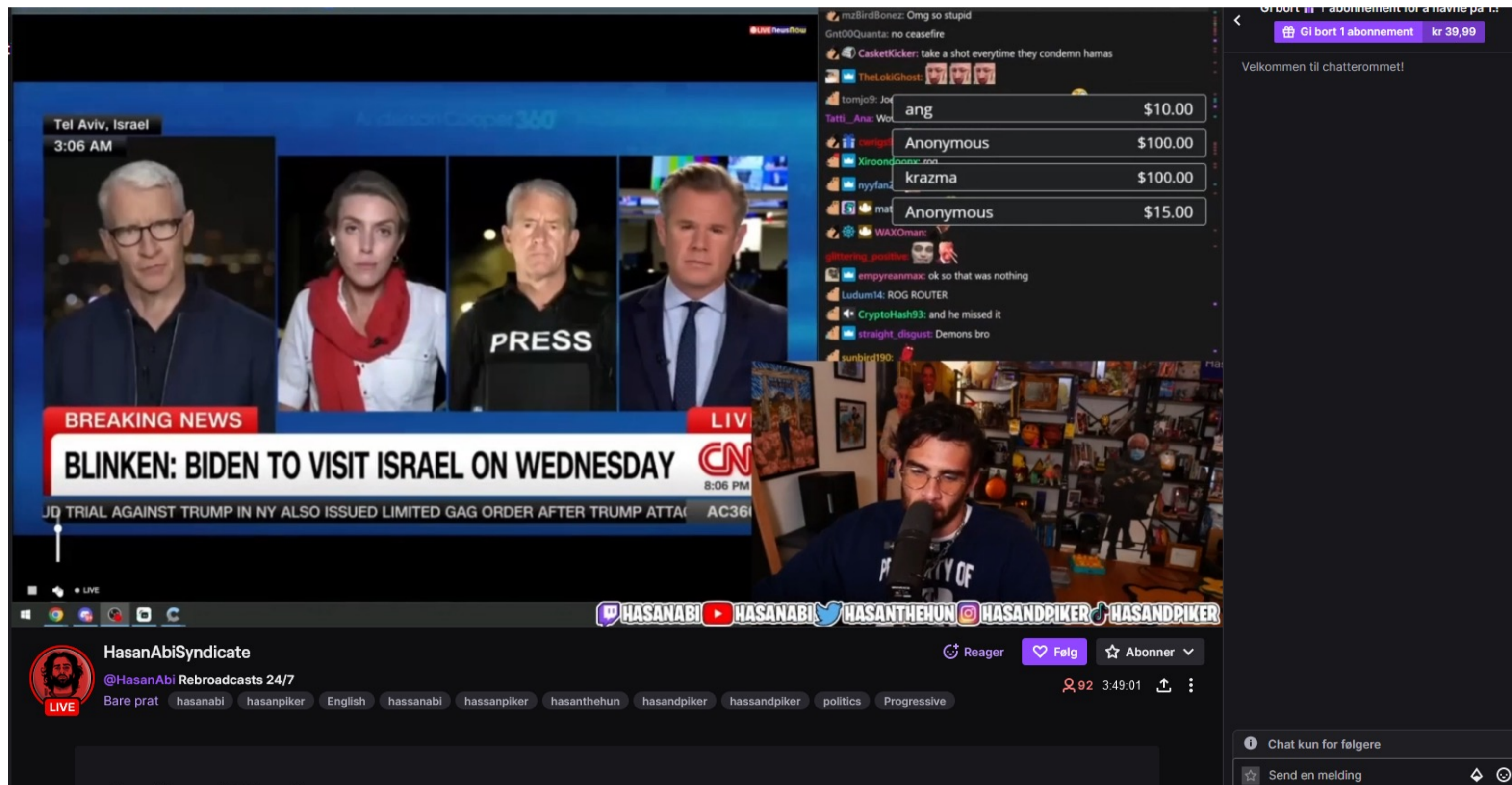# Exploring Political Engagement and Communication in Twitch Chat: A User-Centric Perspective

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Media Futures.

Research question

1. Can Twitch chat be used as an outlet for plitical engagement by both streamers and other users on Twitch. And if so – how?
2. How are the privacy guidelines and Terms of Service perceived by users in the Twitch chat, and to what extent might this influence the political and democratic role of Twitch and social media as a whole?
3. What aspects of Twitch chat, as perceived by users, contribute to political communication that other social media platforms do not offer?

Abstract

This research investigates the role of Twitch chat in political communication and engagement from the perspective of its users, recognizing the significance of social media in contemporary discourse.

In my Master's Project (MP). I will try to understand how Twitch chat can be used as an arena for political communication and engagement from a user's perspective.

Before understanding how Twitch chat becomes an arena for political communication, it's essential to define what Twitch represents. Is it a mass medium comparable to traditional radio and TV, a social medium, or perhaps a social network?

To approach this study, essential concepts such as political communication, deplatforming, and deplatformization are introduced, laying the theoretical groundwork for my research. Understanding deplatforming and deplatformization is vital, particularly within Twitch's context, to discern their impact on user engagement.

Political communication encompasses various forms of interaction between politicians, media, and the public, including interpersonal, mass, and networked communication.

How we perceive user engagement is also an important aspect for my research. For this, a clear distinction between being a passive and an active audience is needed when it comes to understanding when the audience is "engaged" and "disengaged" from both Twitch chat and the overall discussion.

Method

To answer these research questions, I will conduct qulaitative interviews of a selected audience of twitch users, rooted in field observations and a «think aloud» approach. By doing this, I want to understand how and why Twitch users follow certain streamers, and how they percieve Twitch chat as an arena for political communication and engagement from their own perspectives.

Conclusion

The thesis aims to shed light on the impact of political communication and engagement – if there is any notion of it – on Twitch and how it influences our democratic attitudes, providing valuable insights into the evolving role of social media in shaping public discourse and political engagement.

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